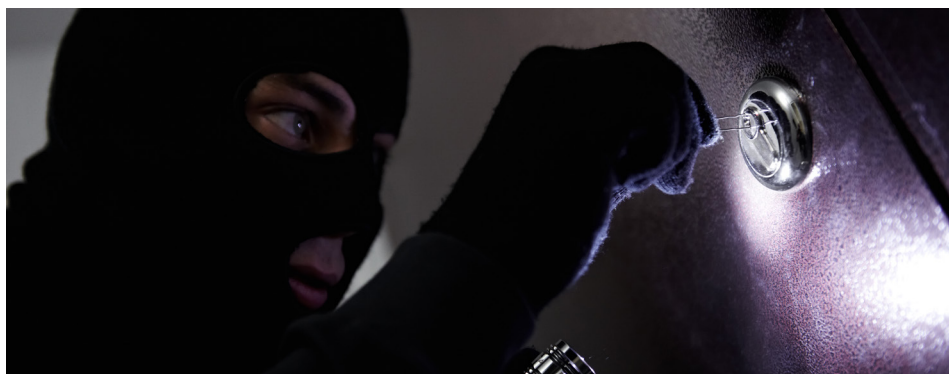


# HARCOURTS PROPERTY FOCUS.

Bringing you the latest news, facts and figures from the world of Australian real estate.

## PUT SAFETY FIRST THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Whether you're holidaying on the other side of the world or simply at the beach down the road, if you're leaving your home for the annual summer break, it can mean there is an increased risk your home will become a target for thieves.

The good news is, there are a few tips and tricks you can use which can make a huge difference in protecting your most valuable asset and safeguarding your home against thieves this summer holiday season:

### DOUBLE CHECK THE LOCKS

Check your homes existing locks and if necessary refit new ones, such as deadlocks and bolts, on doors and windows. Many homes have locks on windows that generally share the one key, so it's a good idea to keep

this key in a safe location (or even with you) whilst you're on holiday.

### MAKE A LIST OF VALUABLES

Keep an up-to-date list of any valuables such as jewellery, antiques, electronics and artwork. Take a photo of each item to keep on file and ensure your insurance company also has a copy. This will make the claim process much easier if something were to happen.

### KEEP KEYS IN A SAFE PLACE

Don't leave house keys hidden outside, as experienced thieves will know where to look. Instead, leave a set of keys with trusted neighbours or friends or take them with you.

### SURVEY OUTDOOR OBJECTS

Lock away garden tools and ladders as they

could potentially help a would-be thief to gain access to your home.

### LET IN THE LIGHT

Use automatic timer switches for lamps, TVs or stereos to come on then turn off each night. This will give the illusion that someone is occupying your home and will deter potential thieves. Outdoor sensor lights are also a good idea not only to deter intruders but to help alert neighbours to someone's presence around your home.

### CLEAR THE LETTERBOX

Arrange to have your letterbox emptied daily. Nothing is a bigger signal to thieves than an overflowing letterbox, or newspapers piling up on the lawn. It may be a good idea to have your newspaper subscription paused or diverted to another address for the duration of your holiday.

### LONG-TERM BREAKS

For longer holiday breaks, arrange to have the lawn mown and the house aired with windows opened occasionally (whilst someone is at the house), so it's apparent someone is either living in or visiting the home regularly.

### BE SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

Don't leave a message on your phone indicating that you are away and be careful to mention the duration of your trip on social media. Recent research has shown that thieves canvas social media to try and identify people who may be away and to locate their address. Alternatively, ensure you have strict privacy settings on your social media profiles.

### HAVE SOMEONE STAY

If possible, ask a trusted friend or family member to be your house sitter.



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# HOT TIPS FOR SELLING IN SUMMER

It's getting to be the hottest time of the year and as the sun comes out, so do the hats, cold drinks and backyard barbeques.

Summer is the season that most Australians long for all year and a season where many prospective buyers are braving the heat to look for their next home. Here are a few tips to make your home more summer-friendly to prospective buyers which will enhance the chance of achieving the best result for your property.

### BRIGHTEN WITH COLOUR

Using the right colours can add a summery, fresh and cool look to your home and you don't have to spend lots of money on repainting the walls. In fact, a common interior design trend these days is to keep walls fairly neutral. Instead, invest in bright, summery cushions and décor, fresh fruit and bright flowers which will give your home that fresh, and colourful edge.

### LET THE OUTSIDE IN

Open your windows and any sliding or bi-fold doors. Although air-conditioning is a quick way to cool down your home, consider using the air-conditioner only prior to a home inspection and then open windows and doors to let in fresh air and summer breezes.

Allowing natural airflow through open windows and screens, with fans turned on at a low speed, can help to show how naturally cool your property is, as well as highlighting outdoor entertainment areas and gardens.

### FRESHEN UP THE GARDEN

Make sure the grass and garden is tidy. Your garden is often the first thing to make an impression on potential buyers, and first impressions are important. In summer, our lawns and shrubbery tend to grow faster and some plants need additional watering, so ensure your lawn is mowed, hedges and unruly shrubs are trimmed, and any wilting or dead plants are revived or removed.

### MAKE THE MOST OF OUTDOOR SPACES

Summer really is the best time of year to showcase your home's outdoor area, so spend some time making it look as appealing as possible. Put away any pool toys or play equipment, consider replacing or buying new outdoor cushions for seating areas, place a bowl of fruit or fresh flowers on outdoor surfaces or even a jug of cold lemonade, sweep and tidy entertainment areas and even consider staging these areas to show just how inviting the space is in the warmer weather.

Overall, the best tip for selling this summer is to put on your 'buyers shoes' and take a look around your house as if you were inspecting it for the first time on a hot, sunny day. Think about what appeals most to you and think of what you can do to further enhance that area. Also take the time to consider what needs to be done to fix any problem areas. Happy summer selling!

## MARKET FACTS

Rolling annual change in dwelling values, combined capital cities

### MEDIAN PRICES



\$621,000



\$522,800

### CAPITAL GAIN

|                        | HOUSES | UNITS | DWELLINGS |
|------------------------|--------|-------|-----------|
| PAST 12 MONTHS         | 10.5%  | 7.7%  | 10.1%     |
| ANNUAL OVER FIVE YEARS | 4.2%   | 3.6%  | 4.1%      |
| ANNUAL OVER TEN YEARS  | 5.8%   | 5.0%  | 5.7%      |

SOURCE: CORELOGIC RP DATA